



# HOW DALITS AND MUSLIMS VOTED IN THE 2024 INDIAN LOK SABHA ELECTION

Sharang R. Mundhe

NET, SET (Political Science), Wardha, Maharashtra

## ABSTRACT

On 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024 results were declared for 18 Lok Sabha elections in India. Elections have always been highly celebrated in India. India's varied diversity makes the Indian election very complex yet curious. In Indian elections religion, caste, ethnicity, topography, and languages play a very dominant role. The kind of extravaganza circus that takes place in India to hold and fight elections is nowhere seen in the world. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections India witnessed swings in voting patterns, especially in the Dalit community. Along with this, Muslim representation decreased in the parliament with just 24 MPs (Member of Parliament). This paper is all about how and why Dalit community votes flocked towards the opposition parties and whether there was any strong consolidation of votes in Muslim confraternity.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

India is a land of diversity. This diversity adds an extra flare to the democracy. Election is the most crucial component in exercising democracy. Indians celebrate elections like festivals. In this elective festival, participants are from different castes (India has more than 3000 castes which are further divided into more than 25000 subcastes), religions (India is the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism). Islam in India constitutes the third largest Muslim population in the world. India also has Christians, Parsis, Jews etc, people with different ethnicities and last but not least people with different languages, traditions and ideologies. These wide arrays of diversity make India the most complex yet curious case to study the election phenomenon.

The 2024 election was the 18th Lok Sabha election in India. Many held this would be the watershed election in India's history. BJP was pinning itself for the third consecutive term whereas Congress was looking for resurrection. On 4th June 2024, the results were out and it shocked everybody. The 'iss bar 400 par' slogan disappeared in thin air whereas Congress magnified their 99 seats win as if they found an elixir. But the results apart, an important thing to look after is, how Indians voted in the 2024 General election. Where and why did Dalits swing their mandates? Was there any consolidation in the Muslims' votes? These are some of the questions I researched.

### Existing Evidence

#### Literature Survey.

Research paper by Aizah Azam & Aarish U. Khan - India's election upset: What Next!. Paper by Abdessalam Saad Jaldi-Retrospective Analysis of the 2024 Indian Elections: BJP wins the general elections against the strengthening opposition of the INDIA bloc.

### Research Gap

The research was done on the voting patterns of Dalits and Muslim communities, but combining research and then finding a conclusion is missing from the research. Swinging of Dalit votes, consolidation of Muslim vote bank, its impact on future politics and why this happened in the first place were not researched earlier.

### Objective

- Where and why did Dalits swing their mandates?
- Was there any Muslim Votes consolidation against the ruling party?

## METHODS

The qualitative research method is used for a better understanding of the topic. Materials such as research papers, books and YouTube videos are taken into consideration.

### Results and Discussion

### How Muslims community voted in the 2024 Lok Sabha Election.

The Muslims in India constitute the third largest population in the world. 14% of India's population is Muslim. Muslims play a dominant role in Indian elections.

India has 15 major Muslim voters-dominated constituencies. Bengal hosts 4 of them, Assam=3, J&K =3, Kerala=2, Bihar=1, Lakshadweep=1, Andhra Pradesh=1. Out of these 15 seats, 13 seats were won by Muslim candidates. Only two seats, both from Assam were won by Hindu candidates. Karimganj is SC's reserved seat which Kripanath Mallah won. In Muslim-majority constituencies out of 15, 10 constituencies have more than 90 to 95% of all Muslim candidates.

TMC, INC, JKNC(Jammu Kashmir National Conference) and Samajwadi Party fielded the most number of Muslim Candidates. The alliance gave tickets to Muslim candidates

only where Muslim voters were in the majority. BJP fielded Dr Abdul Salam from Malappuram in Kerala. He was the only Muslim candidate from Bharatiya Janata Party.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha election, a total of 78 Muslim candidates contested the elections. Out of these 24 Muslim candidates won the election. Among these 24, 13 are from the Muslim-majority constituencies and 11 from Hindu-populated areas. From these statistics, it is quite evident that Muslims are voting primarily for Muslim candidates. Even if the voter wanted to vote for some other candidate, then that candidate was also a Muslim from other parties in Muslim-majority constituencies. It means two things, first there was clear-cut Muslim votes consolidation in Muslim-majority areas and second, parties fielded only Muslim candidates in Muslim voters-dominated areas. This is more visible in J&K (all seats), Lakshadweep, Kishanganj( Bihar), Dhubri( Assam) and Karimganj(Assam). The only exception was Baharanpur, where Yousuf Pathan won defeating Adhir Ranjan Choudhary has more Hindu candidates than Muslims though it is a Muslim-majority constituency.

So in a nutshell, Muslims are winning from Muslim-voters-dominated constituencies as well as from demographic areas where the majority is Hindus, whereas the Hindu candidates won only 2 seats from Muslim majority areas (one is by default reserved for the SC category).

The most significant thing regarding Muslim representation is, the Inclusive Alliance i.e. INDIA Bloc which constituted Congress, Samajwadi Party and Trinamool Congress (prominent members) gave very few seats to Muslim candidates. The INDIA bloc strategically avoided even Muslim-majority areas in Uttar Pradesh to give seats to Muslim candidates. Even the sitting MP, for example, ST Hasan from Moradabad, his ticket was cancelled on the eve of the election and given to Ruchi Veera of SP and yet Samajwadi Party won the seat handsomely with the lead of over 1 lakh. A notable point is, that though the candidates were Non-Muslims in the Muslim Majority areas in Uttar Pradesh people chose to vote INDIA bloc rather than the BJP or Bahujan Samajwadi Party. The reason Muslims were flocking towards the INDIA bloc was the relentless attacks of BJP leaders and the propaganda by the INDIA bloc that the Muslim community was in danger. Muslims voted for safety and security amidst the growing tension, which the INDIA bloc well catapulted.

#### How Dalits Voted In 2024 Lok Sabha Election

Dalits shy away from BJP in the 2024 General election. The reasons for this swing are varied but the propaganda by BJP leaders to change the constitution during the campaign hit the nerves of SC voters. Here the notable point is, that the constitution is not merely an academic book for the Dalit-Bahujan population, it is also a source of empowerment for this community. The prominent thing is, that this shying away doesn't mean SC votes are bagged by the Bahujan Samaj Party in UP or Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi in Maharashtra where the Dalit population is significant. These votes flunked in the INDIA bloc helm. Jatavs in UP, Buddhists in Maharashtra, and Dusadhs/Paswans in Bihar poignantly shifted to the INDIA

bloc. The SCs constitute 17% of the total population of India. BJP-led NDA lost overall 6% of the SC votes.

#### Caste and Its Impacts on Voting

We Indians are clinging to our castes more than ever. This was quite evident from the 2024 election result. Jatav, the Pasi community chose to vote Samajwadi Party and INDIA Alliance rather than vote BJP who want to consolidate all Hindus under the Hindutva umbrella. Social-political activist Chandrashekhar Azad (Ravan) won handsomely in Nagina due to the consolidation of Dalits votes. In Maharashtra Maratha reservation protests which were spearheaded by Manoj Jarange Patil influenced the results heavily. BJP suffered heavy defeat in the Marathwada region in Maharashtra where the impact of protest was fearsome. BJP lost 7 of 8 seats in Marathwada, a notable one was Pankaja Munde (the daughter of BJP's late heavyweight mass leader Gopinath Munde) defeated by a small margin. Maratha's reservation protest directly targeted her and she lost.

Hindu upper caste continues to support the BJP. They remain the strongest loyal base for the BJP's vote bank. A noteworthy point to be noted here is that Adivasi voters voted heavily for the BJP.

#### CONCLUSION

So in a nutshell, Muslims won from Muslim-voters-dominated constituencies as well as from mixed demographics areas where the majority is Hindus, whereas the Hindu candidates won only 2 seats from Muslim majority areas (one is by default reserved for the SC category). This proved their heavy Muslim votes consolidation for Muslim candidates. All major parties fielded only Muslim candidates from Muslim voters dominated constituencies whereas BJP didn't give any seat to a Muslim candidate be it in Muslim-dominated constituencies(except one in Mallapuram Kerala) or any other constituencies.

Dalits swept their votes to the INDIA Alliance. Chose not to vote Bahujan Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh and Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi in Maharashtra - the two parties that carry the social and political activism for SCs/STs.

#### REFERENCES

1. Gupta, P. (2022) How India votes: And what it means. New Delhi: Juggernaut Books.
2. Rama Devi, V.S. and Mendiratta, S.K. (2017) How India votes: Election laws, practice and procedure. Gurgaon, Haryana, India: LexisNexis.
3. Azam, A., & Khan, A. U. (2022). India's election upset: What next!. Global Change, Peace & Security, 1-5.
4. Jaldi, A. S. (2024). Retrospective Analysis of the 2024 Indian Elections: BJP Wins the General Elections Against the Strengthening Opposition of the INDIA Bloc.
5. Yogendra Yadav, S.S. (2024) The sociology of 2024 Lok Sabha elections in 10 charts, ThePrint. Available at: <https://theprint.in/opinion/the-sociology-of-2024-lok-sabha-elections-in-10-charts/2130168/> (Accessed: 19 August 2024).
6. How caste dynamics influenced the outcome (2024) Hindustan Times. Available at: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/how-caste-dynamics-influenced-the-outcome-101717531713357.html> (Accessed: 19 August 2024).

7. team toi / Jun 6, 2024 (no date) Impact of jarange's Maratha reservation agitation on Mahayuti candidates in Maharashtra Elections: Aurangabad News - Times of India, The Times of India. Available <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/aurangabad/impact-of-jaranges-maratha-reservation-agitation-on-mahayuti-candidates-in-maharashtra-elections/articleshow/110751230.cms> (Accessed: 19 August 2024).
8. Polls 2019: A view on 15 Muslim-majority Lok Sabha constituencies (no date) The Economic Times. Available at: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/elections/lok-sabha/india/polls-2019-a-view-on-15-muslim-majority-lok-sabha-constituencies/articleshow/68756816.cms> (Accessed: 19 August 2024).
9. Baharampur Lok Sabha election results 2024: Baharampur Winning Candidates List and vote share (no date) India Today. Available at: <https://www.indiatoday.in/elections/lok-sabha/west-bengal/baharampur-constituency-result-25510> (Accessed: 19 August 2024).